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Approved For Release 2000/08/07 : CIA-RDP96-00787R000400070010-2

ORD # 1405-73

13 March 1973

SG11

MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT : Paranormal Research

REFERENCE : Your solicitation of comments on proposed research program

1. The only observation I would offer at this time concerns the basic strategy of approach to research in this area. It seems to me that when those with scientific training set out to do research of this sort, they typically set up a group of impressive controls based on the rules of logic and probability as these generally apply to the scientific acceptability of evidence in their respective fields. The trouble is that these same people are also usually completely ignorant of the methods by which the phenomena they seek to study are typically faked by stage performers. Lacking this knowledge, they overlook the critical (and often very simple) variables, and, impressed with the soundness of their elaborate methodology, are sitting ducks for the skilled magician. On the other hand, the stage performer, called in to observe and critique, is quick to dismiss the phenomena with the claim that he can duplicate it by trickery. Whether he demonstrates his claim or not, the matter of whether or not the particular instance in question is real or faked is neither proved nor disproved. What is really needed is a teaming up of the skilled stage performer with the scientific investigator so that experiments can be designed to specifically zero in on the alleged fakery.

2. In Geller's case, the recent TIME magazine article (12 March 73, p. 112) alleges that Geller "came under suspicion when a group of psychologists and computer experts from Hebrew University duplicated all of his feats and called him a fraud." But until someone subjects Geller to tests specifically designed to rule out the methods these people used to duplicate his feats, nothing has been proved about Geller. To test the phenomena, this

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is the place to begin. All else,--the nature of the phenomena, application, etc.--comes later.

SG11


Chief, Psychological Services Staff
Office of Medical Services

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Paranormal Research

FROM:

C/PSS/OMS
706 CofC

EXTENSION

3250

NO.

ORD # 1405-73

DATE

13 Mar 73

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S
INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

SG11 [REDACTED]
726 Ames

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